

WASHINGTON POST AND
TIMES HERALD

FEB 23 1964

He's Softened on British

Allen Dulles a Blatant Crusader Against the Empire Back in '02

CPYRGHT

CPYRGHT Phil Casey

BACK IN 1902, when the world was 62 years younger and so was Allen W. Dulles, little Allen, who was all of 8, sat down and wrote a history of the Boer War.

It seems to have been a cinch, and Dulles, retired head of the Central Intelligence Agency, remembers it as no trial at all. It took him only two months and, at 50 and 25 cents a copy, it made about \$500 for the Boers.

"The world has changed, and so has the boy, and so have his opinions, but the book is stuck in the past and is therefore irrevocable, which is lucky. It's a lovely book, and it contains great misspelling and carefree grammar.

"If I knew then what I know now, I'd never have said some of those things," said Dulles the other day, reminiscing over an old scrapbook in the glass-enclosed workroom of his handsome Georgetown home.

The thing about the book is that it is blatantly pro-Boer, and the author, with the years, has come to think a lot of the British.

People haven't been very much aware of the book since 1902, but it came to notice again at The Washington Post's recent Book and Author Luncheon. Dulles spoke, and referred to this first book of his, written in 1902.

He's not the youngest man in the world, but everybody at the luncheon knew that in 1902 he must have been barely a whippersnapper, and we figured he had the date wrong. It turns out he didn't. That book came out in March, 1902, and Dulles truly was barely a whippersnapper.

For his research on this book, which ran for seven chapters and 31 pages and had the simple, direct title, "The Boer War," the young author used few, but terrific, sources. They were, not necessarily in their real order of importance: The Washington Post; his grandfather, John W. Foster, who had been Secretary of State under President Benjamin Harrison; his uncle, Robert Lansing, who later was Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson, and a book by A. Conan Doyle of Sherlock Holmes fame, "The Great Boer War."

All of them but Lansing were pro-

British, but somehow Dulles came out on his uncle's side, and he made no bones about it.

The Root of Evil

THE BOOK was printed privately, but it sold, and the boy got letters from all over the world. And he deserved them, if only for one deathless sentence that is applicable to practically all strife and that we must never forget:

"There would not be any quarreling if it was not for the gold."

There's a preface written either by his grandfather or his uncle — Dulles can't remember which—that goes in part like this:

"The author of this history, who is 8 years old, has been since the war began in South Africa an ardent admirer and partisan of the Boers, and this in spite of the fact that all his immediate family favor the British cause . . . It is needless to say to one who reads this volume that throughout his labors the author has been entirely free from suggestion or correction in regard to subject, language or arrangement. . ."

The very first sentences let the reader know he's in for a fine ride. Here they are with the young author's own happy spelling, punctuation and syntax.

The New Commers

"IN THE YEAR 1652 the Boers landed on Cape of Good Hope. Finding no people but a few Indians which they had to fight before they could have the land to themselves, but as soon as they conquered the Indians they set to work to build towns and houses. But the smallpox got among the Dutch so there was room for the new commers; but after a little the Dutch found that there were some gold at a place called Johannesburg. In 1806 Britain sent trupes which were defeated by the dutch and they took cape town. But in the year 1814 Britain paid a large sum of six millions to restore Cape town and some other South African land. I think if Britain had known

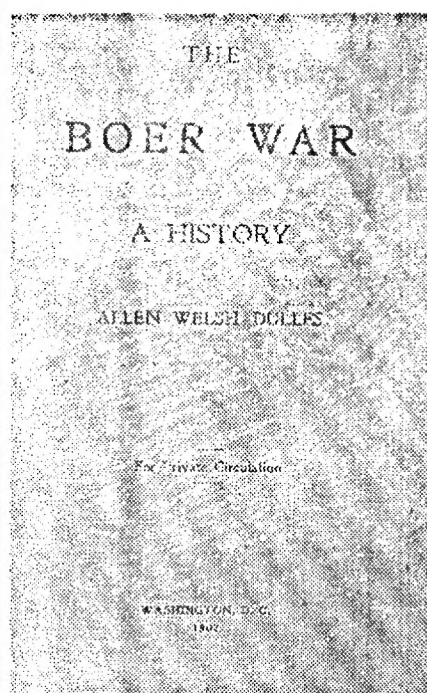
March 22, 1902
Dear Allie:
I have just finished reading
your book and I want to congratulate
you. It is fine, and you must have worked
very hard on it. Mather has sold five
copies already.
with love from John Foster Dulles

Thirteen-year-old John Foster Dulles's penny postcard to his brother, addressed to the Dulles home on 18th st. nw.

Continued

8-Year-Old's Book Was Near And Purse Behind the Boers

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The title page.

sooner that there was going to be war she would not have paid so much... Britain did not hear about the gold right away but as soon as he did hear he sent truces. If Britain had been a little quicker he might of had the gold... There would not have been any quarreling if it was not for the gold.

"It was not right for the British to come in and get the land because the Boers came first and they had the first right to the land... It is not because there is not enough room on earth for every body to be comfortable, but the reason is that every nation wants more land than each other even if they haven't enough people to cover the space."

And then: "Britain has not been fighting as hard as she could since 1652, but she would fight a battle or too but there hasn't been any real fighting till 1899 when she began to fight because she saw that the Dutch were getting land and gold. The British

were sly enough to go in and get in the land when the Dutch were being killed by the small pox."

Titular Precision

IN THOSE dear, dead days when Dulles took on Britain single-handed, that nation was either male or female but never neuter, and often was not capitalized.

His book had seven chapters, with various names, and when he came to the last chapter he knew exactly what to call it. He called it "The Last."

He was a forthright author, showing no potential at all for the secrecy he later adopted as a profession. After polishing off the British for seven chapters, he signs off with this, and reveals a new source, a Boer captain:

"All this talk about the Boers having slaves is not true for the Boers have not had any slaves since 1832, for a Boer captain told me so. America cannot say anything about the slaves for the Americans let men have slaves in the Phillipens now."

"The Boers are very industrious and are hard workers and are fond of the

Bible, but the Boer prisoners are not even allowed to have the psalms for they think it will incourage them. They love their country especially and they ought to have it in spite of the wicked English who are trying to rob them of it. I hope that the Boers will win for the Boers are in the wright and the British are in the wrong in the War"

Sales Report

WELL, AS DULLES said the other day: "If I knew then what I know now..." But it's good that he didn't.

And one reward of authorship that was better than money was a card from his 13-year-old brother, John Foster Dulles, who later became Secretary of State under former President Eisenhower. The card said:

"Dear Allie, I have just finished reading your book and I want to congratulate you. It is fine, and you must have worked very hard on it. Mother has sold five copies already. With love from John Foster Dulles."

Futhermore, the book rated a review in The Washington Post.



Allen Dulles (right) with his brother and literary lauder, the late John Foster Dulles, at National Airport in 1956.

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